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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
INITIAL POLLUTION REPORT

I. HEADING

DATE: July 11, 2003

SUBJECT: POLREP for the ARCO Research Lab Site, Harvey, Cook County, Illinois

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POLREP #: POLREP 1- Initial - ARCO RESEARCH LAB REMOVAL

II. BACKGROUND

|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Response Authority: | CERCLA (# ILN000508307) |
| NPL Status:         | Non-NPL                 |
| Site ID No:         | B53D                    |
| Start Date:         | June 30, 2003           |
| Completion Date:    | Pending                 |
| Latitude:           | 41°37'21"N              |
| Longitude:          | 87°38'01"W              |

III. SITE INFORMATION

A. Incident Category

Time critical soil removal of uncontrolled hazardous substances, including drums, solid materials, and asbestos.

B. Site Description

1. Site location

The ARCO Research Lab Site is located at 400 East 147<sup>th</sup> Street in Harvey, Cook County, Illinois. The western boundary of the site parallels the Illinois Central Railroad or Metra Electric commuter rail line, the northern boundary is 147<sup>th</sup> Street, the eastern boundary of the site is adjacent to Field Elementary

School, and the southern boundary of the site is adjacent to other industrial facilities. The nearest residential areas are approximately 500 feet from the site and the nearest body of water is the Calumet River, approximately 2,400 feet east of the site.

## **2. Description of threat**

Samples were collected of suspected asbestos-containing material from the main building and surrounding buildings during a U.S. EPA site investigation in April 2002. Samples were collected from pipe insulation, ceiling tile paper, floor tile, and duct insulation. Samples indicated the presence of asbestos (25-30%) in these materials, with an estimated 135,000 square feet of ACM. It was observed that 50% of the ACM was damaged, loose, or had fallen to the ground and mixed with other building debris. Several containers, with their contents unknown, were observed throughout the property and in several buildings. Access to the property and building is unrestricted, allowing for future vandalism and potential for fire. A day-care facility and elementary school are directly east of the facility posing a potential direct contact threat to children.

## **3. Site background**

The Site is the former location of the ARCO Chemical Research facility, comprising numerous buildings on 30 acres in Harvey, Illinois. The site was acquired by BP Amoco in the 1980s and later closed around 1990. A developer attempted to lease out the various buildings but only attracted a few tenants. The City of Harvey acquired the property in the mid 1990s due to delinquent taxes. The site includes numerous buildings including research/offices, power plant, and empty above-ground tank farm, and utility tunnels with pipes containing ACM. One company manufactured lignosulfate, an agricultural food additive, and dust suppressant. The company left a significant amount of product and waste at the site.

The site is currently vacant with extensive vandalism and unsecured entrances. Extensive damage is visible to most of the windows, as well as numerous fires in several rooms and hallways. All recyclable materials had been removed from the buildings leaving insulation scattered throughout. There are numerous piles of debris throughout the site, with some containing drums of unknown contents.

### **1.4 State and local actions to date**

The Illinois EPA performed an inspection of the facility to determine if an action was required. The Illinois EPA recommended to the Illinois Attorney General that remedial action was required at the site. The Attorney General referred the site to the U.S EPA.

## **IV. SITE INFORMATION**

### **A. Situation**

#### **1. Response activities to date**

Work began for the site on June 30, 2003, with the following:

- On June 30, 2003, Earth Tech Inc. (Earth Tech), mobilized to the site and set up utilities, coordinated equipment delivery, and conducted a site walk-through.
- Earth Tech began removal activities on July 1, 2003. Removal activities for the remainder of the week included collection and segregation of all tires, drums, and steel debris.
- On July 7 through 10, 2003 Earth Tech transferred black and white solid materials from fiber

drums into cubic yard boxes and staged some of the fiber drums with black material under a canopy area for later disposal. Cubic yard boxes were staged in a garage attached to Building E until disposal can be arranged.

- On July 7, 2003, asbestos consultant ECOServ evaluated the asbestos situation in Building A. They will provide a cost estimate for the removal of the loose or free asbestos material.
- On July 10, 2003, Earth Tech began to collect all 55-gallon drums and stage them on a concrete pad south of Building H. Drums were numbered for sampling.

**B. Planned Removal Activities**

- Removal activities will include the removal of loose/free asbestos containing materials in Building A and along outdoor open pipe chases, the removal of all containers throughout the site, and removal of product materials associated with Building H.

**C. Next Steps**

- Continue to stage 55-gallon drums and begin to collect all small and larger containers in buildings and spread throughout the site for disposal.
- All drums and containers that have product remaining will be sampled and hazard categorization test performed for future disposal.
- Begin asbestos removal in Building A and various pipe chases throughout the site.

**D. Key Issues**

- None

**5. COSTS**

|              | <u>Cost to date</u> | <u>Ceiling</u>    | <u>% Remaining</u> |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ERRS         | \$12,330            | \$ 250,000        | %4.9               |
| START        | <u>\$ NA</u>        | <u>\$ NA</u>      | <u>NA</u>          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>\$12,300</b>     | <b>\$ 250,000</b> | <b>%4.9</b>        |

The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based upon figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.